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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/785,211	02/24/2004	Robert M. Lofthus	A3249Q XERZ 2 00783	8821

7590 08/01/2006

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EXAMINER

NICHOLSON III, LESLIE AUGUST

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3651

DATE MAILED: 08/01/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/785,211	Applicant(s) LOFTHUS ET AL.	
	Examiner Leslie A. Nicholson III	Art Unit 3651	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 May 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 16 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Newly submitted claim 16 is directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons: claim 16 does not disclose the a sheet position sensing system or the first input area and first output area positioned relative to the second input area and second output area such that a sheet transported from each path would cross.

Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claim 16 is hereby withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

Response to Arguments and Amendments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-15 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

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invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1,5,6,7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jackson USP 5,634,636 in view of Judge USP 4,618,292.

Jackson discloses a multifunction printed sheets interface system that includes:

- plural sheet input areas (front left side of conveyor 20, front right side of conveyor 20)
- plural sheet outputs areas (rear left side of conveyor 20, rear right side of conveyor 20)
- a sheet position sensing system (40)
- a sheet transporting system (20) that includes independently operable sheet transports (26) that provide variable angle driving for selectable sheet rotation and translation (C2/L40-45) and that provides selectable sheet merging (116)

Jackson does not expressly disclose a plane having first and second angularly spaced sides, with a first of the sheet output areas being adjacent the first angularly spaced side of the plane and a second of said sheet output areas being adjacent the second angularly spaced side of the plane.

Judge teaches a plane having first and second angularly spaced sides, with a first of the sheet output areas being adjacent the first angularly spaced side of the plane and a second of said sheet output areas being adjacent the second angularly spaced side of the plane (fig.10,11) for the purpose of providing the capability of sending the sheet in any direction (C4/L17-25) so an input station can be replaced with an output station, and vice versa.

At the time of invention it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to employ a plane having first and second angularly spaced sides, with a first of the sheet output areas being adjacent the first angularly spaced side of the plane and a second of said sheet output areas being adjacent the second angularly spaced side of the plane, as taught by Judge, in the device of Jackson, for the purpose of providing the capability of sending the sheet in any direction so an input station can be replaced with an output station, and vice versa.

5. Claims 2,8-10,14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jorg USP 5,810,346 in view of Judge USP 4,618,292 (see ¶4) further in view of Graushar USP 6,125,760 and Goldberg USP 6,735,332.

Jorg discloses a method and system that includes:

- feeding sheets to a plurality of respective input areas (A, B, C, D) of a printed sheet interface system
- transporting the printed sheets from the input areas to a plurality of outputs areas (F, G) with a sheet transport system, with a plurality of spaced, independently operable sheet transports (316, 416), that provide selectable merging (116), and translation (116)
- sensing a position, with a sheet position sensing system (220) of the sheets during transporting.

Jorg discloses all the limitations of the claim, but it does not disclose printing

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sheets on a plurality of printers or said sheet transports providing variable angle driving for selectable sheet rotation.

Graushar teaches a similar method that includes printing sheets on a plurality of printers (36,42,54) for the purpose of printing different parts of a book (at least C5/L25-28,40-43).

It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to modify Jorg by printing the sheets on a plurality of printers, as disclosed by Graushar, for the purpose of printing different parts of a book.

Goldberg teaches sheet transports providing variable angle driving for selectable sheet rotation for the purpose of directing the object to its desired orientation (C1/L62,63).

It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to modify Jorg by providing variable angle driving for selectable sheet rotation, as disclosed by Goldberg, for the purpose of directing the object to its desired orientation.

6. Claims 4,11-13,15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jorg USP 5,810,346 in view of Graushar USP 6,125,760 as applied to claims 8 and 10 above, and further in view of Jackson USP 5,634,636.

Jorg and Graushar, together disclose all the limitations of the claims, but they do not disclose a sheet transporting system that includes a multiplicity of variable-sheet-

feeding-direction sheet transports closer to four other sheet transports than the sheet and configured for variable angle driving.

However, Jackson discloses a similar device that includes a sheet transporting system (20) with a multiplicity of variable-sheet-feeding-direction sheet transports closer to four other sheet transports than the sheet and configured for variable angle driving for the purpose of modifying paper movement or orientation to nearly instantaneously correct for discrepancies in the motion state of the paper, including its position, orientation, trajectory, velocity, flexure, or curvature (C2/L35-45).

It would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to utilize a sheet transporting system with a multiplicity of variable-sheet-feeding-direction sheet transports (26) closer to four other sheet transports than the sheet and configured for variable angle driving for the purpose of modifying paper movement or orientation to nearly instantaneously correct for discrepancies in the motion state of the paper, including its position, orientation, trajectory, velocity, flexure, or curvature.

Conclusion

7. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not

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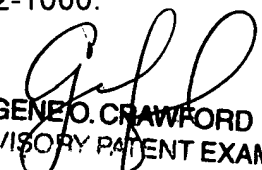
mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Leslie A. Nicholson III whose telephone number is 571-272-5487. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8:30 AM - 5 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gene Crawford can be reached on 571-272-6911. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


GENE O. CRAWFORD
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

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7/25/2006